
what's up doc?



by Dr. Mary Livers

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Hello, OJJ Family:

It's been a really good week – I've been out and around this week, but I've also been in the office some. I've been fighting a bit of cold or something and it's trying to take me down, but I'm fighting it. We've had a little bug going around central office, with sore throats, fever, congestion and scratchy voices.

I want to thank Budget Manager Adina Collins and Undersecretary Connie Percell, who held their monthly budget meetings with all the programs this week. I am so pleased with how much growth I have seen in the accountability and the wise stewardship of our team. I know we are doing a much better job, making smart decisions about how to utilize our resources. I know there has been a lot of professional and personal growth around this area of leadership. It's just another improvement for OJJ - our staff deserves the credit.

I was able to visit Bunkie to speak to the Rotary Club this week. I drove up U.S. Hwy. 71 and as I approached Bunkie, there was a nice big sign on the highway that said "OJJ Welcome to Bunkie." And of course, there is a big sign on the site of the new facility announcing that it is the future home of the new therapeutic facility for youth. I was invited there to talk about OJJ, and some of the guest included Sen. Eric LaFleur, Rep. Robert Johnson, DA Charles Riddle and Judge James Mixon. In addition, there were about 30 other business people from in and around Bunkie. My presentation was well received, I think. I always enjoy being able to make this type of presentation, because most citizens do not have a real understanding of what we do.

If any of you are members, or know members, of civic clubs like Rotary, Lions, etc., and you think they would like to know more about OJJ, please let them know that our leaders would love to come and present. We have a PowerPoint presentation already prepared and we would love to spread the word about OJJ.

Today the Jetson facility held a celebration for staff and youth, to show appreciation and to honor all the people who had a part in Jetson earning a perfect score on their recent ACA audit. The weather was perfect on this first day of autumn, and the staff pulled out all the stops to present a barbecue feast with all the trimmings. We enjoyed all manner of barbecue – ribs, chicken, pork chops, sausage, and there were beans, salad, potato salad and rolls. And dessert - a huge sheet cake emblazoned with the Jetson colors of blue and white. Many thanks to JJS Alonzo Jones, who masterminded the logistics for the event. Director Daron Brown and the team wore special t-shirts that said "Have Faith...ACA Perfect score 100 %." Staff and youth engaged in friendly volleyball games and were able to relax and enjoy the day. Thanks also to the staff members who were on-site at the crack of dawn to make sure everything would be ready, and to all the staff spouses who came out to assist. I'm so proud to see that the Jetson team really IS a family.

Coincidentally, we received an email today from a former Jetson youth who said he's now in college, and he said, "I miss my family at Jetson so much. I learned a lot from them. I would love to come and share my experiences with the youth." In case you are ever unsure, each of you makes a difference in our kids' lives.

Wishing you all a great weekend, with a little cooler temperature we may actually be able to get outside. As ever, my thanks to you, in every OJJ location, for all you do every day, to make a difference, and to meet the mission.

Sincerely, "Doc" *Dr. Mary Livers*

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